THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Import of cotton by China during the current cotton season is estimated at 1.2 million metric tons out of which 60% is likely to be imported from USA. Chinese import of Indian cotton is very negligible. Production, consumption and import of cotton in China during 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 are as under:

(In million metric tons)

Year (August-September)	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
PRODUCTION	5.32	4.92	5.00
CONSUMPTION	5.70	6.40	6.50
IMPORT	0.10	0.69	1.20

Souce: International Cotton Advisory Committee

(c) Prices of cotton yarn (both hank and cone) are ruling higher than the price level of the last year. The increase in cotton and cotton yarn prices over last year's price level is a global phenomenon and is not confined to India alone, and is therefore unlikely to adversely affect the Indian cotton textile industry in the today's global market. Cotton prices have now shown declining trend from its peak leve reached in the first week of November, 2003 and it is expected to be stablised as the arrivals of crop increase. The situation is still evolving and impact, if any, is yet to emerge.

Textile Exports

930. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the strategy being adopted by Government to boost textile exports from the country in view of the increased quota sanction from Europe and other countries;

(b) how does India compare with China in terms of textile exports; and

(c) the details of vision and implementation process Government have evolved to challenge China and to increase India's share in textile exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) There is not any increased quota sanction from quota countries including European Union Member Countries.

(b) A number of studies conducted by Government to compare India's competitiveness against China.

(c) Government has been taking a number of steps to evolved to challenge China and to increase India's share in textile exports. Some of the important initiatives taken are:

(i) The Government has de-reserved the women segment of readymade garment from the SSI sector. It has also raised the SSI investment limit for knitted segment to Rs. 5 crores.

(ii) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operation from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector.

(iii) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%. Cost of machinery has also been reduced through Fiscal Policy measures. This further encourages modernisation.

(iv) With a view to making fabric production competitive, the custom duty on shuttleless looms has been brought from 15% to 5%.

(v) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(vi) Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get the garments/textiles pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

(vii) The Government has launched a centrally sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres and to give fillip to exports.

viii) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centers, a scheme " Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched.

Bail out package for Textile Units

931. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has worked out a bailout package for potentially viable textile units, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the source of funding these units; and

(c) whether Government has identified location for setting up apparel parks, if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) The Government has announced a package for restructuring of debt portfolios of potentially viable textile units having debt exposures of Rs. 2.00 crores and above. This package *inter-alia* provides that banks and financial institutions would be permitted to access external commercial borrowings (ECBs) and convert rupee term loans into foreign currency loans and the recipient units would pay interest at the rate of 8% to 9% on rupee loan basis.

(c) Since the inception of scheme, eleven Project Proposals have been sanctioned for setting up Apparel Parks at Tronica City & Kanpur (U.P.), Surat (Gujarat), Thiruvanantapuram (Kerala), Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Ludhiana (Punjab), Bangalore (Karnataka), Tirupur & Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu), Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Mahal (Jaipur, Rajasthan).

Decline in Export of Handloom products

†932. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a decline in the export of handloom industries products during the year 2002-03;

(b) if so, the target fixed for export for the current year;

(c) what has been the actual quantum of export in this regard and the amount earned thereby; and

(d) the reasons for not achieving the target of export?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.